"The Health Justice Project proved to be one of the most valuable and enriching educational experiences at Loyola. HJP made me a lawyer. I learned how to effectively advocate on behalf of clients, how to write more persuasively and how to think more critically. Thank you so much." – Patrick Keenan Devlin, JD 2012

Welcome from the Director
As the school year comes to a close, we have much to celebrate. Since our founding in the fall of 2010, the Health Justice Project (HJP) law students, lawyers, social work students, medical residents and doctors have served over 700 patients of Erie Family Health Center. Together, we have overcome the social and legal issues that prevent long-term health and stability for these low-income individuals and families.

I am thrilled to welcome our newest partners in health justice, Curt Rodin (JD ’75) and his wife, Linda. The Rodin’s are supporting the Rodin Fellowship for a junior attorney in HJP and improving our ability to serve clients, expand access to justice and train the next generation of public health attorneys. We look forward to doing just that in the 2012-2013 school year!

We are grateful to all of our outstanding partners, including Erie Family Health Center, AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, Equip for Equality, Lawyers’ Committee for Better Housing, and Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work, as well as our colleagues at the Beazley Institute for Health Law and Policy and Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Without the support and valuable contributions of our partners, this important work and opportunity to teach law students about the fundamentals of practice and the importance of collaboration would not be possible.

As the Spring 2012 Take Aways, Spring Snapshot and Student Spotlight demonstrate, HJP students embraced the opportunity. They invested in their own professional growth and, as a result, became outstanding representatives of our clients and the legal and health law professions. We congratulate the HJP students on their accomplishments and commend them for their commitment to social justice, service and values. To our recent graduates, we look forward to following your successes and are honored to be your colleagues in the law.

Emily

Emily A. Benfer
Clinical Professor of Law
Health Justice in Action: Spring Snapshot

This spring, Health Justice Project students assisted over 70 patients and achieved multiple victories, including:

- **Maggie O’Donoghue and Beth Karpiak, 2Ls,** assisted an uninsured client who had accumulated thousands of dollars in hospital bills. As a result of health impairments, the client was unable to afford the costly medical care. Maggie and Beth successfully advocated on behalf of the client, asserting his rights under the Hospital Uninsured Patient Discount Act. Their advocacy resulted in forgiveness of over $2000 in hospital bills, a sum that would have resulted in food insecurity or homelessness for the client.

- **Ilissa Lazar, 3L,** appealed the DHS calculation of her client’s Food Stamps (SNAP) benefits. Ilissa successfully argued that, despite living in the same property, the client’s mother should not be included in the client’s SNAP unit. Ilissa’s advocacy was so persuasive that the judge admonished DHS on the record for faulty recordkeeping and service. Ilissa represented the same client in an appeal of a Social Security Disability Income denial. Ilissa’s advocacy resulted in a rare ruling from the bench and a finding that the client is disabled and entitled to benefits. These successes resulted in a dramatic increase in the client’s monthly benefit amount, including back benefits and access to crucial supportive services. According to the client, no other attorney he contacted would represent him and he could not have overcome these social determinants of health without Ilissa’s assistance.

- **Graham Bowman, 2L,** appealed the Social Security Administration’s decision to deny a client disability benefits. In a hearing presided over by an Administrative Law Judge, Graham argued that the Social Security Administration’s decision was incorrect because the cumulative effect of the client’s health impairments resulted in a disability. As a result of Graham’s intervention, the client was able to access her rights and not forced to choose between paying for food and sophisticated legal representation. The client is awaiting a decision from the Administrative Law Judge.

- **Britany Fijolek, 2L,** represented an uninsured client who accumulated thousands of dollars in unpaid medical bills. Due to her medical impairments, the client was unable to complete applications for financial assistance. Britany asserted the client’s rights under the Hospital Uninsured Patient Discount Act, resulting in forgiveness of 100% of the client’s medical debt. The forgiveness of her medical debt prevents the client from facing food insecurity and homelessness.

- **Senior Policy Students Graham Bowman, 2L, Shannon Flaherty, 2L, Aleah Gathings, 2L, Ilissa Lazar, 3L, and Justice McDevitt, 3L,** represented the National Coalition for the Homeless and developed a two-prong policy strategy, including litigation and legislative reform and the first study of stakeholders and individuals who are homeless, to assist the organization in overcoming the criminalization of homelessness. According to Executive Director, Neil Donovan, “I was so impressed and moved by the response and passion of your class. To start, your passion, commitment and investment come through so clearly. . . I think that the direction that you took the assignment was right on the mark. This will be very translatable for use in other sites.”

Health Justice by the Numbers

- **738** Patient referrals from Erie Family Health Center received by Health Justice Project since December 2010
- **17** Law, Social Work, and Public Health students participated in the Health Justice Project Spring 2012 Semester
- **97** Medical providers trained by HJP in 2011-2012 on the social determinants of health, patient resources, and patient advocacy
- **$561,553** Payment and forgiveness of medical expenses for Health Justice Project clients in 2011-2012
- **$547,235** Medicaid reimbursement to health care institutions based on the Health Justice Project’s Medicaid successful denial appeals in 2011-2012
- **$4,230** Reduced housing expenses for Health Justice Project clients in 2011-2012
Since the beginning of 2012, Sandra Torres has served the crucial role of coordinating patient referrals from Erie providers to the Health Justice Project (HJP). Sandra screens the referrals to identify issues requiring legal advocacy through the HJP and issues that can be addressed through referrals. She frequently contacts referred patients to explain Erie’s partnership with HJP and to provide non-legal resources for patients when needed.

Sandra explains, “it has been wonderful to work with patients at Erie from the time they receive their referral to hearing about the outcome of their cases, and to share in their joy over successful outcomes through the Health Justice Project’s advocacy.”

Sandra is also a Behavioral Health Coordinator at Erie Family Health Center. Prior to this position, she worked as a Substance Abuse Case Manager and as a Care Manager for Erie’s Depression Collaborative. Additionally, Sandra is working with Allyson Gold, HJP’s Supervising Attorney, to redesign Erie’s data collection in order to more accurately track the number of patient/clients served, the issues raised by each patient/client, demographic data, and referral outcome.

Sandra’s efforts help to ensure that patients receive the assistance they need as efficiently as possible, which is of great benefit to providers, the HJP legal team, and most importantly, patients. “Erie offers so much for patients, from case management, to diabetes management, to mental health services,” said Sandra. “With the addition of legal services through Erie’s partnership with the Health Justice Project, patients benefit from an incredible amount of collaboration across disciplines. Everyone at Erie knows what the Health Justice Project does and recognizes that it is an important part of providing essential services to patients.”

Spring 2012 Semester “Take-Aways”

At the end of the spring 2012 semester, the students enrolled in the Health Justice Project were asked to reflect upon the semester. In their words, the lessons the students will apply to their careers include:

• Collaboration gets the job done.
• I learned how important communication is and how important it is to ask questions and to keep asking questions – of ourselves, of others, of the facts, of our research.
• Do the best you can for yourself and clients, believe in yourself and your clients and continue to challenge yourself in every way, every day.
• We serve real people with real families and real problems, as well as real concerns and triumphs. We can’t get so caught up that we forget that.
• A lot of people come to us with severe health problems. But don’t let that fool you; our clients are incredibly strong people despite the significant barriers they face.
• When representing people who have very serious legal issues, it’s important to find the balance between compassion, learning, and advocacy. Remember people are counting on you to be an advocate.
• Not even the most experienced attorney knows everything and we have to always look at our work as a learning opportunity. This will allow us to give better advice and be better attorneys.
• To be in a position to help is so important. The level of support in HJP gave us a sense of family and made it possible to address the legal issues.
• How quickly we can adapt and learn when we are invested in what we are doing.
• You can’t ever give up.
• Approach everything as an opportunity to learn. Approach the new and unknown as a humble student and life long learner.
• The common themes in HJP are respect for others, humility, gratitude, and personal development. These should be the themes in everything we do.
• We are all “hummingbirds,” catalysts of change!
Health Justice Project Student Spotlight

Andrea Callow, Student Attorney

Andrea Callow, 3L, is a Student Attorney in the Health Justice Project (HJP) from Arlington, Virginia. Prior to law school, she worked at healthcare advocacy and policy organizations including the Medicare Rights Center in New York City and Families USA in Washington, D.C. During her time at Loyola, Andrea worked with the HIV/AIDS Project at the Legal Assistance Foundation and interned for Health and Disability Advocates on the SSI Homeless Outreach Project. After law school, she plans to continue working in the public interest with an advocacy or legal services organization or with the government.

As a Student Attorney with HJP, Andrea engaged in legal research, advocacy and representation on behalf of low-income clients. She represented clients in informal hearings to establish eligibility for public benefits and met with clients to advise them of their legal rights and potential remedies. She also gave a presentation to Erie Behavioral Health staff on Social Security Disability Income for people with mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Because of Andrea's advocacy, an HJP client was able to obtain Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, and Food Stamps (SNAP), which he had been denied. According to Andrea, “people’s problems are not cleanly siloed into medical, legal or social, so treatment of these problems shouldn’t be either.”

Andrea Callow, 3L, is a Student Attorney in the Health Justice Project (HJP) from Arlington, Virginia. Prior to law school, she worked at healthcare advocacy and policy organizations including the Medicare Rights Center in New York City and Families USA in Washington, D.C. During her time at Loyola, Andrea worked with the HIV/AIDS Project at the Legal Assistance Foundation and interned for Health and Disability Advocates on the SSI Homeless Outreach Project. After law school, she plans to continue working in the public interest with an advocacy or legal services organization or with the government.

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According to Andrea, the HJP experience was of great benefit because it allowed her to critically analyze her working style and evaluate each step of her case work process to ensure she was being as efficient and effective an advocate as possible. She was able to focus on what it means to be “client-centered” in her advocacy, and how to best involve clients and empower them during and after the course of formal representation.

Aleah Gathings, Student Attorney & Senior Policy Student

Aleah Gathings, 2L, is former Student Attorney and current Senior Policy Student in HJP from North Jersey. Before coming to Loyola, she worked in public health policy in New York City. During law school, she has worked with the Chronic Care Collaborative in Denver, Colorado and plans to continue to work in policy and legislative advocacy campaigns after graduation, in order to, in her words, “work toward equity and in the furtherance of justice for low-income communities and communities of color.”

Aleah became interested in HJP because “health justice” intrigued her. With her background in public health and interest in disparities in health and education, she knew this would be an ideal opportunity to learn about areas of law that affect low-income communities.

Aleah describes HJP as a model for interdisciplinary collaboration, which is critical for clients who need professional advocates across multiple areas (legal, medical, and social work). As a past Student Attorney, she worked on housing conditions cases and measured success by the growth of her ability to advocate legally and by her client’s overall empowerment. Participating in HJP gave her the opportunity to be assist others and to learn who she is as an attorney and the type of attorney she wants to be.

“As a Student Attorney with HJP, you not only have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the clients you serve, but also to become a stronger and more effective attorney and advocate.” – Andrea Callow

“My experience with HJP is a great reminder to never underestimate the power of people or the power of policy.” – Aleah Gathings

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“My experience with HJP is a great reminder to never underestimate the power of people or the power of policy.” – Aleah Gathings
Emergency Food Stamps Enrollment
If your patients are unable to purchase groceries, they may qualify for emergency Food Stamps (SNAP). Patients qualify if they have less than $100 in cash resources, less than $150 in gross monthly income, and a monthly income less than their monthly rent and utilities. Alternatively, if someone in the patient’s household is a migrant farmworker and the household has less than $100 in cash resources, the household is also eligible. Patients can apply for emergency Food Stamps at their local DHS office. If you identify a patient who may qualify for this benefit or was denied, please refer him or her to the Health Justice Project (HJP).

Therapeutic Diet Allowance Enrollment
Patients with dietary restrictions may qualify for additional food assistance benefits through the Therapeutic Diet Allowance (TDA) program. Eligible conditions and dietary restrictions include: ulcer (and other chronic conditions requiring a bland low-residue diet), diabetic, high-protein, high-caloric, and high vitamin for children ages 3-13. With your assistance, patients can apply for TDA at their local DHS. If you would like additional information, please contact HJP at healthjustice@luc.edu.

Prevent Utility Shut Off
Many patients may have difficulty paying energy bills, particularly air conditioning, during the hot summer months. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides assistance to households unable to afford their utility expenses. If a low-income household includes a person with a serious illness or a newborn, the family may be protected from utility shut-off for up to 60 days at any time of the year. Please refer your patient to HJP through the internal referral system in EMR if you identify a patient at risk of utility shut off.

I-HEAL Guide and Trainings Available
Please contact HJP to schedule a training in any of the I-HEAL topics or with questions about referrals. For a copy of the I-HEAL Guide, which provides an overview of laws affecting patients, please email healthjustice@luc.edu. I-HEAL was created by HJP students.

Refer Patients to Overcome Social Determinants of Health

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Social History Questions</th>
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| I: Income Assistance and Insurance (Public Benefits and SSI/SSDI, Charity Care, Medicaid) | Do you ever have trouble making ends meet?  
Do you ever have a time when you don't have enough food?  
Have you been denied WIC? Food Stamps? |
| H: Housing and Tenant Rights (Conditions, Evictions, Utilities) | Is housing ever a problem for you? Have you noticed signs of infestations or mold?  
Do you ever have trouble paying the electric or heating bill?  
Is your child acting lethargic or having trouble breathing?  
Are you having trouble with your landlord?  
Are you having trouble paying the rent? |
| E: Education (Enrollment, Special Education)    | How is your child doing in school? Is he/she getting the help to learn what he/she needs?  
Is your child in Head Start, Preschool or any other early childhood program?  
Does your child feel safe at school?  
Are you a pregnant or parenting teen? |
| A: Advocacy and Appeals (Benefit Denials)       | Were you recently denied public benefits, disability benefits, or a medical card?         |
| L: Legal Referrals                              | Do you feel safe in your relationship? Do you have questions about your immigration status? |
Announcements

Thank you to Curt Rodin (JD ’75) and his wife, Linda Rodin, who generously donated a gift to fund the Rodin Fellowship in the Health Justice Project! The Rodin Fellowship will provide leadership development, experience working in interdisciplinary collaboration, and career growth for an attorney interested in public interest health law. The Rodin Fellowship will also directly increase the Health Justice Project’s ability to serve its clients. Allyson Gold, will serve as the inaugural Rodin Fellow.

Welcome Adjunct Clinical Professors of Law! Colleen Boraca, AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, and Mark Swartz, Lawyers Committee for Better Housing, will be teaching in the Health Justice Project and supervising Student Attorneys in the fall 2012 semester.

Allyson Gold highlighted the important work of the Health Justice Project at multiple conferences. At Loyola’s Norman Amaker Public Interest & Social Justice Law Retreat, she described how HJP works to eliminate health disparities. She also presented “Early Detection and Action: How MLPs Can Use Proactive Legal Strategies in Housing Conditions Cases” at the National Medical-Legal Partnership Summit. Because of this presentation, she was invited to present on “Affirmative Legal Strategies to Combat Substandard Housing” at the Legal Services University Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. She also discussed the Health Justice Project and health disparities at the Loyola Urban Issues Summit.

The New York Times highlighted a Health Justice Project client in the article, “Homeless Families in Illinois Walking a Hard Road.” The article described the work of Health Justice Project partners and students to assist the client and her family. As a result of the article, the family was placed in temporary housing. The Health Justice Project continues to assist the family in their effort to become permanently housed.

Emily Benfer was invited to Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health to train faculty in clinical teaching and to assist the school in the creation and design of the Public Health Law and Policy Clinic set to launch in fall 2012.

Welcome Miranda Margetts, JD, LLM! Miranda is a practicing health attorney from Sydney, Australia who will be learning about the medical-legal partnership model and volunteering with Health Justice Project.

Thank You to the Spring 2012 Students!

Chelsea Borgeson  Shannon Flaherty  Giorie Mahn
Graham Bowman  Aleah Gathings  Justin McDevitt
Alissa Bugh  Bee Garrity  Laura Morgan
Andrea Callow  Beth Karpia  Rachelle Sico
Alex Dembitz  Courtney Lane  Nicole Zylstra
Britany Fijolek  Ilissa Lazar

“You open one door, and they open ten or twenty doors for you. You keep hope alive. I’m grateful for all that you do.”

- Health Justice Project Client